(iv) Col.-338

(v) Lt. Col.-215

(vi) Lt . Col. (TS)-213

(vii) Maj.-42

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of reply to part (a) and (b) of the Question.

Security of Andaman Islands

3968. DR. RAJA RAMANNA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state whether Government taking into account the importance of the Andaman Islands, are considering increased security of these Islands, so that the traffic routes of our mercantile ships around it, are protected from buzzing and piracy by unfriendly countries ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : The Navy and the Coast Guard, individually and jointly, maintain regular surveillance in the seas around the Andaman & Nicobar Islands by deploying ships and aircrafts. Adequate preventive measures against buzzing and piracy of the ships at sea in the area have been instituted. No such incident has also been reported to the Navy or the Coast Guard in the recent past.

Aggressive Patrolling along LoC

3969. SHRI C. M. IBRAHIM : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that while Pakistan has built up forces along the Line of Control, with positioning of its reserve brigades on Pak side of the LoC, the Indian army was asked to lay off aggressive patrolling on LoC on the eve of US President's visit to the sub-continent;

(b) whether the Pak move to position their reserve forces was considered a prelude to another Kargil like venture;

(c) if so, the reasons for lay off of effective patrolling; and

(d) what steps have since been taken for effective security of Indian side of LoC and to prevent any Pak-misadventure ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) Government are aware of certain readjustments and reinforcements of Pakistani troops on the Line of Control. Movement of certain reserve formations from their permanent locations has also been reported. Patrolling by our troops along the Line of Control continues as before.

Constant vigil is maintained on the border and all appropriate measures have been taken to thwart any attempt of misadventure on the part of our adversaries.

Commissioning of INS Brahmaputra

3970. SHRI SHANKAR ROYCHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the reasons for excessive delay in building and Commissioning the warship INS Brahmaputra at the Garden Reach Shipbuilding and Engineering (GRSE) Works have been investigated and analysed;

(b) if so, the factors which have been established as responsible for the delay; and

(c) the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken to prevent such delays in future ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The lack of adequate infrastructure at the time of placement of the order; attempt to achieve a very high degree of indigenisation, delay in receipt of main weapon system from the foreign source because of internal problems there, and low productivity owing to a number of factors, have been identified as the contributing factors for the delay;

(c) As a measure of corrective action, the Company has undertaken improvement of infrastructure including modification and lengthening of the slipway and computerisation to build frigates at a faster pace. The factors relating to low productivity have been gone into and remedial action has been taken, an important ingredient of which is the signing of a wage agreement in January 2000 incorporating productivity norms.